WestEd

School code: _____ Interviewer: _____

Participant Title(s): _____

_____

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SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TEAM FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL

1. **Tell me about your background.**

   [Probes: When did you come to the school? What is your educational background? How many years have you served in this role? At this school? Did you have prior experience or training working with low-performing schools or students?]

2. **What major school improvement efforts has your school engaged in over the last five years?**

   [Probes for turnaround schools: Who or what do you think was responsible for the turnaround? Which of the efforts was most important for accomplishing the turnaround?]

   [Probe for comparison sites: Which of the school improvement efforts had the most significant effects on student achievement? Who or what was responsible for this effort?]

3. **How did teachers react or respond to the changes in school improvement efforts?**

   [Probes: Were any teachers particularly supportive? If so, how did they show their support? Did any teachers resist the changes? If so, how was the resistance dealt with? Who dealt with it?]

4. **Describe how the school improvement team is involved in planning and initiating school improvement plans.**

   [Probes: Who is involved in planning school improvement plans? What is the team's role in planning efforts? What is the process for planning school reform? For initiating improvement plans?]

5. **What information is used to develop school improvement plans?**

   [Probe for types of data used, how the data is used to develop plans, and specific examples of using data to develop plans]

6. **What resources were used to support the actions for improvement? If so, how have the resources been used?**

   [Probes: Purchase supplemental classroom materials? Extend professional development? Establish new positions to support the changes? Extend the school day?]

7. **What support did you provide teachers to help them successfully implement school improvement efforts? When? How were the teachers motivated to participate in the reform?**

   [Probes: Help from people outside the school (e.g., model developers, consultants)? Professional development? Opportunities to meet as grade-level or content teams? Teacher incentives?]

8. **Are there factors that help or hinder the ongoing improvement of the school? What are the main distracters you feel that keep you from achieving school goals?**

   [Probe for specific distracters, which can range from interruptions to parent problems]

9. **Is there anything else I should know to tell the story of the school's improvement efforts?**